

ABSTRACT

5 A surgical sponge comprises a radiopaque marker having a high radiographic density
and a distinctive, visually recognizable shape. The marker has an x-ray density equivalent to
at least about 0.1 g/cm² of BaSO₄. It produces an x-ray image with high contrast and a shape
that is readily recognizable and differentiated from the images produced by other items and
structures commonly seen in x-rays of post-operative patients. Owing to the distinctive, high
10 contrast image produced by the marker, the sponge is reliably and unambiguously detected.
This is so even in situations where the sponge is inadvertently left in the surgical wound.
Discomfort, trauma, and possibly fatal consequences that might otherwise occur are virtually
eliminated. The surgical procedure is carried out with decreased likelihood of a sponge
being retained inadvertently.